

REMARKS

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action dated July 13, 2006. Claims 1, 14, 35 and 37 have been amended. Claims 25-34, which were previously withdrawn in response to a restriction requirement, have been cancelled to expedite prosecution. Claims 1-24 and 35-38 remain pending. Claims 4-10, 13, 22, and 23 had been withdrawn in response to the restriction requirement, but remain in the application. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the pending claims in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

In the Office Action dated July 13, 2006, the Examiner indicated that claims 18-21, 24, and 37 are allowed. Applicant notes that claim 22 and 23 depend from claim 18. Claims 22 and 23 been withdrawn in the response to the restriction requirement, but they remain in the application. Therefore, claims 22 and 23 are also allowable and are in condition for allowance.

Claim 14 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim in any intervening claims. Claim 14 has been amended to incorporate the features of original claim 1 and to be in independent format. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 14 is allowable and is in condition for allowance.

Claim 37, which is a dependent claim, was allowed. Accordingly, claim 37 has been amended to be in independent format.

Claims 1 – 3, 11, 12, 15 – 17, 35, 36 and 38 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,958,584 (Williamson) and/or by U.S. Patent No. 3,475,008 (Taylor). A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference. (MPEP 2131) As explained in greater detail below, neither Williamson nor Taylor can

support a Section 102(b) rejection of the claims at least the reason that the references fail to disclose each and every element set forth in the claims.

Williamson is directed toward an amphibious vehicle having retractable wheels and sliding hull sections. The amphibious vehicle has a twin wishbone suspension that includes a retraction mechanism consisting of linkages, a motor, worm gears, and a linkage housing so as to lower the wheels for operation on land or to retract the wheels for operation in the water. Accordingly, the retraction mechanism is configured to retract the wheels upwardly away from the support surface, e.g., the ground, when the vehicle has entered the water. When the wheels are in the retracted position in, they do not support the amphibious vehicle on the support surface. The retraction mechanism moves the suspension system in a direction substantially perpendicular to the ground.

Taylor is directed to a trailer jack assembly for use in a leveling house trailer. The jack assembly includes a pair of upstanding legs for supporting the weight of opposite side portions of the associated house trailer and a pair of adjustable length members pivotally secured at one end to the lower ends of the jack's support links and at the other end to the opposite side portion of the trailer frame. In this manner, each jack structure not only supports at least a portion of the weight of the associated frame but also provides a means whereby double crossed bracing is provided to resist lateral shifting of the frame relative to the ground from which it is supported. Column 1, lines 21-35. Accordingly, the trailer jack is configured to move the upstanding legs vertically via the adjustable length member so as to lift or lower the trailer frame vertically relative to the ground.

Independent Claim 1 is directed toward a vehicle support system comprising a base, first and second elongated support assemblies pivotally coupled to the base and movable between spread and stowed positions, and a control mechanism mechanically interconnecting the first and second support assemblies. Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the first and second support assemblies are each configured to engage a portion of a support surface in the spread position and in the stowed position such that the

first and second support assemblies support at least a portion of the base above the support surface. Claim 1 also has been amended to clarify that the control mechanism is configured to control pivotal movement of each of the first and the second support assemblies between the spread and stowed positions in a direction generally parallel to the support surface.

Neither Williamson nor Taylor disclose, teach, or suggest a vehicle support system as claimed, wherein the first and second support assemblies are configured to engage a portion of a support surface in the spread and stowed positions such that the first and second support assemblies support at least a portion of the base above the support surface. The references also do not disclose, teach, or suggest a control mechanism configured to control pivotal movement of the first and second support assemblies between the spread and stowed positions in a direction generally parallel to the support surface. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the cited references do not disclose each and every feature of claim 1. Any modification of the teaching in the references to provide Applicant's claimed vehicle support system would destroy the intended function of those devices. Further, any such modification would only be apparent to one of ordinary skill in the art after understanding the present invention and applying impermissible hindsight analysis. Therefore, claim 1 is patentable over the applied references and is in condition for allowance.

Claims 2-13, 16, and 17 depend from claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits for the above reasons and the features in these claims that claims 2-13, 16, and 17 are also patentable over the applied references and are in condition for allowance.

Independent claim 35 is directed toward a vehicle support system comprising a base, first and second elongated support means for supporting the base above a support surface, and a control means for controlling the movement of the first and second support means. Claim 35 has amended to clarify that the first and second support are movable relative to the base generally parallel to the support surface between spread and stowed

positions. The control means is configured to control the pivotal movement of the first and second support means between the spread and stowed positions.

Neither Williamson nor Taylor disclose, teach or suggest such a vehicle support system having first and second support means movable relative to the base and generally parallel to the support surface between spread and stowed positions, and a control means that controls the pivotal movement between the spread and stowed positions. Any modification of the teaching in the references to provide Applicant's claimed vehicle support system would destroy the intended function of those devices. Further, any such modification would only be apparent to one of ordinary skill in the art after understanding the present invention and applying impermissible hindsight analysis. Accordingly, the applied references do not disclose, teach, or suggest each and every feature of claim 35. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 35 is patentable over the applied references and is in condition for allowance.

Claims 36 and 38 depend from claim 35. Applicant respectfully submits for the above reasons and the features of the claims that these claims are also patentable over the applied references and are in condition for allowance.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance and request issuance of a Notice of Allowance in this case.

Applicant believes the requisite fee is provided with this response. However, if additional fees are due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 50-0665, under Order No. 170298068US from which the undersigned is authorized to draw. If excess fees have

been paid, then please refund the excess to our Deposit Account No. 50-0665, under Order No. 170298068US.

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Respectfully submitted,

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